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Rep. Tunney Seeks $1.3 Million for TV

LOS ANGELES—Youth triumphant over age, that is the message on every beach and every street corner in this lush, luxuriant state. And it is the theme of a political contest that could in November determine the control of the Senate of the United States and the direction of policy for a long time to come.

Sen. George Murphy, the song-and-dance man featured in dozens of movies over the years, is running for a second term at the age of 68 and after a serious throat ailment that impairs his speaking ability. His opponent is 36-year-old Rep. John V. Tunney, son of the former heavyweight boxing champion Gene Tunney.

Tall, athletic, with a broad, toothy Theodore Roosevelt grin, Tunney has been three times re-elected to Congress from a traditionally conservative district in the Los Angeles area, each time with a greatly increased percentage, even when Ronald Reagan running for governor and Richard Nixon—for President carried his district by whopping majorities.

Here in the Golden West you don't run for office, you pose for office. Image is all-important and television is supreme. In this light Tunney believes that the five-point lead he showed in a poll just taken by the Oliver Quayle organization is the measure of his image as against that of Murphy, whose billboards ironically call him "the action senator."

While his name is not on any ballot, a third man figures in this contest. Patrick J. Frawley is a self-made millionaire who has given generously to extreme right-wing causes. Shortly before Murphy announced he would run for a second term it was disclosed that he was on the payroll of Technicolor, a company that Frawley then controlled, at $20,000 a year.

Although this fact had been on file in Washington for some time—Murphy before going to the Senate had been a Technicolor vice president—no one had picked it up. At the same time it was brought out that Technicolor, that is to say Frawley, was paying half the rent on Murphy's $520-a-month apartment in Washington while he was using the company's air travel card for his cross-country jaunts.

Frawley had an earlier unhappy experience in elective politics. He backed the volatile rightist, Max Rafferty, superintendent of public instruction, for the Senate seat then held by Thomas H. Kuchel. Kuchel was in the moderate Hiram Johnson-Earl Warren tradition that was a long success story in California politics.

Shortly before the primary Kuchel was the object of a smear, vicious even in terms of jungle politics. Courageously he sued for criminal libel. A publicity officer for one of the Frawley companies was one of those put on probation as a result of the court action. Frawley himself declined to testify.

Rafferty won the primary. He was defeated in November by Alan Cranston, the Democratic candidate. It was widely believed that Kuchel would have won handily if it had not been for the upsurge of the right wing in the primary. Thus a vital Senate seat in President Nixon's home state was lost. The same thing can happen when control of the Senate is critical in the instance of Murphy.

Tunney does not intend to refer during the campaign to Murphy's trials with the Frawley embrace. He doesn't have to. This was done for him by one of those quirks typical of California politics.

In the last hours before the filing deadline in June the industrialist and art collector, Norton Simon, entered the Republican primary against Murphy. Simon ran a hard-hitting campaign. In newspaper ads and on television he addressed a series of questions to the senator about his relationship with Technicolor and his independence or lack of it, in the Senate. Simon, who got 33 per cent of the vote, rather remarkable against an incumbent, reported spending $1,800,000 of which $100,000 came from contributors other than himself and his family.

Tunney is discovering what the money scramble means. He has spent six months in the state, running first in the primary, defeating Rep. George E. Brown Jr., considerably to the left of center, and now working hard for funds to pay for television. As a result he has missed a number of House votes, and this will be a Murphy attacking point. But he hopes to garner the $1,300,000 essential to get into California's 10 big television markets.

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